

III. REMARKS

1. Claims 1, 20, 29, 39 and 49 are amended. Claims 1, 20-36 and 39-72 are pending in this application.

2. Claims 1, 20, 22, 26-35, 39, 41-45, 47-49, 51 and 55-71 are patentable under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) over Liechti et al., U.S. Patent 5,715,164 ("Liechti") in view of Herring, U.S. Patent 6,064,992. Claim 1 recites a settlement center adapted to receive a request for funds transfer from the data center ... wherein said memory only includes an ascending register and no descending register. Claim 1 also recites that no credited funds for postage are stored in or transferred to the memory. Neither Liechti nor Herring, individually or in combination, disclose or suggest a postage meter with only an ascending register and no descending register where no credited funds for postage are stored in or transferred to the memory of the meter.

The Examiner notes that Liechti does not disclose or suggest the meter memory having only an ascending register and no descending register as claimed by Applicant.

Herring discloses a postage meter that includes a memory (15, 16) (Col. 2, L. 6-25). The memory in Herring includes an ascending credit register (30) (Fig. 2) to store an accumulated value of credit (Col. 2, L. 32-33). Another ascending register is disclosed and referred to as the "tote register" (31), for storing an accumulated total value of postage charge dispensed by the postage meter in franking mail items (Col. 2, L. 26-45; Col. 3, L. 52-54). Additional credit may be entered into the postage meter by the postal authority or by an authorized entity (Col. 3, L. 21-39).

The ascending credit register of Herring performs essentially the same function as a traditional descending register but with an added step (Col. 4, L. 5-9). Instead of comparing the postage amount to be franked with the descending register to determine if there is sufficient postage in the meter, Herring adds the postage amount to be franked with the accumulated total value of postage franked (as stored in the ascending "tote register" (31)) before comparison with the ascending credit register (30) (Col. 4, L. 10-17). The "tote register" performs the function of a traditional "ascending register". If the total of the postage amount to be franked combined with the value of the ascending "tote register" (31) is less than the amount of credit in the ascending credit register (30), the requested postage is printed (Col. 4, L. 10-23).

The ascending credit register (30) of Herring is essentially a descending register, as the difference between the amounts stored in the ascending credit register (30) and the ascending "tote register" (31) are always decreasing or descending. This is not what is claimed by Applicant. Claim 1 recites that the memory includes only an ascending register and no descending register. Even though ascending credit register (30) of Herring lacks the traditional name "descending register" its function within the metering system is that of a descending register. Thus, Herring fails to disclose or suggest only an ascending register and no descending register as claimed in claim 1. Because Herring fails to disclose or suggest this feature of claim 1 the combination of Herring and Liechti cannot as well.

In addition, both Herring and Liechti store values of postage credit not to be exceeded that are replenished in traditional ways (See, Herring at Col. 3, L. 20-39 and Col. 4, L. 10-17); See, Liechti at Col. 5, L. 22-33). This is contrary to what is

claimed in Applicant's claim 1. Claim 1 recites that no credited funds for postage are stored in or transferred to the memory. Therefore neither Herring nor Liechti, individually or in combination, disclose or suggest not storing or transferring credited funds for postage to the memory of the apparatus as called for in claim 1. Thus, claim 1 is patentable under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) over the combination of Liechti in view of Herring.

Independent claims 20, 29, 39 and 49 are patentable over the combination of Liechti and Herring for reasons similar to those above. Claims 22, 26-28, 30-35, 41-45, 47, 48, 51 and 55-71 are patentable by reason of their respective dependencies.

3. Claims 21, 23-25, 36, 46, 50 and 52-54 are patentable under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) over Liechti in view of Herring and in further view of Verma et al., U.S. Patent 4,833,618 ("Verma").

For the reasons discussed above the combination of Liechti and Herring fail to disclose or suggest the features of independent claims 1, 20, 29, 39 and 49 from which claims 21, 23-25, 36, 46, 50 and 52-54 depend. Thus, the combination of Liechti, Herring and Verma cannot as well. Claims 21, 23-25, 36, 46, 50 and 52-54 are patentable over of Liechti, Herring and Verma by reason of their respective dependencies.

4. Claim 40 is patentable under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) over Liechti in view of Herring and in further view of Alder et al., U.S. Patent 4,069,675 ("Alder").

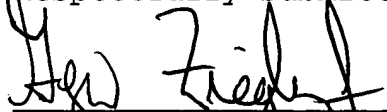
For the reasons discussed above the combination of Liechti and Herring fail to disclose or suggest the features of independent claim 39 from which claim 40 depends. Thus, the combination of Liechti, Herring and Alder cannot as well. Claim 40 is

patentable over of Liechti, Herring and Alder by reason of its respective dependency.

For all of the foregoing reasons, it is respectfully submitted that all of the claims now present in the application are clearly novel and patentable over the prior art of record, and are in proper form for allowance. Accordingly, favorable reconsideration and allowance is respectfully requested. Should any unresolved issues remain, the Examiner is invited to call Applicants' attorney at the telephone number indicated below.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge payment for any fees associated with this communication or credit any over payment to Deposit Account No. 16-1350.

Respectfully submitted,



Geza C. Ziegler, Jr.
Reg. No. 44,004

21 September 2005
Date

Perman & Green, LLP
425 Post Road
Fairfield, CT 06824
(203) 259-1800 Ext. 134
Customer No.: 2512

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